

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SAO PA 01328 01 OF 02 251221Z

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 MCT-01 CU-02 HEW-04 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 ACDA-07 IO-13

DHA-02 AID-05 IGA-02 PC-01 TRSE-00 EB-07 SIL-01

LAB-04 ARAE-00 SY-05 /111 W

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P R 242030Z MAY 77

FM AMCONSUL SAO PAULO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7739

INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 SAO PAULO 1328

E.0. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, BR

SUBJ: SAO PAULO STUDENTS HOLD THIRD POLITICAL PROTEST RALLY

REF: (A) BRASILIA 3829 (B) SAO PAULO 1161

SUMMARY: ABOUT 9,000 STUDENTS IN THE CITY OF SAO PAULO
PARTICIPATED IN "NATIONAL DAY OF STRUGGLE" RALLIES ON MAY 19.
BETWEEN 500 AND 1,000 STUDENTS IN SAO CARLOS IN THE INTERIOR OF
SAO PAULO STATE ALSO HELD A PROTEST RALLY. ABOUT 8,000
STUDENTS GATHERED IN FENCED-IN MEDICINE FACULTY GROUNDS, WHICH
GOVERNMENT HAD TACITLY AGREED TO AS MEETING PLACE, AND ABOUT 1,000
AT PROHIBITED "FREE TERRITORY" IN FRONT OF LAW FACULTY. POLICE
BROKE UP RALLY AT LAW FACULTY WITH MASSIVE POLICE PRESENCE,
USING TEAR GAS AND WATER CANNONS, BUT ALLOWED RALLY AT FACULTY OF
MEDICINE TO TAKE PLACE. INTENSE GOVERNMENT BEHIND THE SCENES
NEGOTIATING WITH STUDENTS CONCERNING RALLIES REVEALED THE DELICACY
WITH WHICH THIS ISSUE IS REGARDED BY AUTHORITIES. ABOUT 30
STUDENTS WERE DETAINED FOR QUESTIONING, THEN REPORTEDLY RELEASED,
AS GOVERNMENT FOLLOWED FIRM BUT CAUTIOUS APPROACH TO GROWING
STUDENT POLITICAL MANIFESTATIONS. INDICATIONS OF COMMUNIST
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PAGE 02 SAO PA 01328 01 OF 02 251221Z

PARTY (PCB) TAKING ADVANTAGE OF STUDENT ACTIVIES ARE INCREASING.
MAY 19 RALLIES WERE A SUCCESS FROM STUDENTS'S POINT OF VIEW, AT
LEAST EQUALING TURNOUT FOR MAY 5 DEMONSTRATION. (REFTEL B). MORE
DEMONSTRATIONS ARE EXPECTED NEXT WEEK AND IN JUNE. END SUMMARY.

2. ABOUT 8,000 STUDENTS IN SAO PAULO CITY DEMONSTRATED AT THE
MEDICINE FACULTY AND AN ADDITIONAL 1,000 IN FRONT OF THE LAW FACULTY

ON MAY 19 IN SUPPORT OF A NATIONALLY ORGANIZED "NATIONAL DAY OF STRUGGLE". AN ADDITIONAL 500 TO 1,000 STUDENTS REPORTEDLY DEMONSTRATED IN THE INTERIOR CITY OF SAO CARLOS. NO OTHER STREET DEMONSTRATIONS WERE REPORTED IN THE STATE. POLICE HAD PREVIOUSLY TACITLY AGREED TO THE RALLY ON THE GROUNDS OF THE FENCED-IN MEDICINE FACULTY, DESPITE THE JUSTICE MINISTER'S PROHIBITION AGAINST STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS, BUT THEY DISPERSED THE STUDENTS GATHERED AT THE "FREE TERRITORY" IN FRONT OF THE DOWNTOWN LAW FACULTY. ACCORDING TO PRESS AND RADIO REPORTS, POLICE BLOCKED AUTOS AND PEDESTRIANS FROM THE AREA NEAR THE LAW FACULTY WITH SHOULDER TO SHOULDER POLICE. STUDENTS WERE DISPERSED BY ADVANCING SHOCK TROOPS USING TEAR GAS AND WATER CANNONS. STUDENTS RAN TO NEARBY SQUARES TO CARRY OUT SMALLER PROTEST RALLIES, THEN PARADED FOR A SHORT WHILE DOWN A MAJOR DOWNTOWN STREET, PICKING UP SUPPORTERS FROM PEOPLE IN THE STREET. POLICE ENDED PARADE QUICKLY AND WITHOUT INCIDENT.

3. MEDICINE FACULTY RALLY WAS MORE ORGANIZED. SPEAKERS RECITED THEIR DEMANDS OF GOVERNMENT (1) GENERAL AMNESTY, (2) FREEDOM FOR IMPRISONED STUDENTS (3) END TO TORTURE (4) RESTORATION OF DEMOCRATIC LIBERTIES. SAO PAULO CARDINAL ARNS TOLD CONGEN OFFS THAT HE HAD NEGOTIATED WITH SECOND ARMY COMMANDER GEN. DILERMANDO GOMES MONTEIRO BOTH THAT POLICE WOULD PERMIT STUDENTS TO GATHER ON CAMPUS AND THAT THERE WOULD BE NO REPRISALS FOR STUDENTS' DEMANDS, WHICH WERE MADE KNOWN IN ADVANCE TO GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES. CARDINAL ARNS SAID THAT HE AGREED WITH STUDENTS' DEMANDS. THEIR POLITICAL ACTIVISM, IN HIS OPINION, WAS BROUGHT ABOUT BY THE GENERAL POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC SITUATION IN BRAZIL AND WOULD BE REMEDIED BY A RETURN TO DEMOCRACY. ARNS CAUTIONED THAT THERE
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 SAO PA 01328 01 OF 02 251221Z

WERE RADICALS AMONG STUDENTS AND POLICE WHO WANTED A "CORPSE" AS A RESULT OF THE STUDENT PROTESTS, BUT HE FELT THE MOST DANGEROUS RADICALS WERE IN THE POLICE. HE CITED STATE SECRETARY O PUBLIC SECURITY, COL ERASMO DIAS AS ONE OF THESE RADICALS.

4. CONSERVATIVE ACADEMIC DIRECTORATE LEADERS FROM PRIVATE MACKENZIE UNIVERSITY SOUGHT OUT CONGEN OFFS MAY 19 TO TELL ABOUT THEIR EFFORTS TO LEAD STUDENT MOVEMENT IN MORE MODERATE DIRECTION. THEY HAD JUST COME FROM ONE HOUR MEETING WITH GEN. DILERMANDO IN WHICH HE REPORTEDLY HAD OFFERED TO SERVE AS CONDUIT TO BRASILIA FOR STUDENT DEMANDS. THESE STUDENTS REPORTED THAT TENSION OVER LONG ANNOUNCED RALLY HAD HAD EFFECT ON STUDENTS' PARENTS WHO HAVE BEEN ACTIVELY COUNSELLING MODERATION TO STUDENTS AND GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES. PARENTS' INVOLVEMENT HELPS EXPLAIN UNUSUAL BEHIND THE SCENES ATTENTION GOVERNMENT HAS GIVEN TO DEALING WITH MAY 19 STUDENT PROTESTS, AND STRICT ORDERS TO POLICE TO AVOID VIOLENCE.

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PAGE 01 SAO PA 01328 02 OF 02 251225Z

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CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 2 OF 2 SAO PAULO 1328

5. SAO PAULO NEWSPAPER COVERAGE REVEALS MARKED DIFFERENCES IN TREATMENT OF PROTESTS. O ESTADO DE SAO PAULO HAS FAIRLY STRAIGHT REPORT ON EVENTS. JORNAL DA TARDE, ESTADO'S AFTERNOON PAPER, GIVES MORE LEFTIST SLANTED REPORT. FOLHA DE SAO PAULO HIGHLIGHTS STUDENTS' LINKS WITH WORKERS, IN COVERAGE THAT HEWS CLOSE TO PCB OBJECTIVES. FOLHA NOTES THAT WORKER REPRESENTATIVES CONSISTED OF "INDEPENDENT METALWORKERS" WHO DENOUNCED LEGALLY RECOGNIZED LABOR UNIONS AS BEING "AT THE SERVICE OF THE DICTATORSHIP." HOWEVER, CONGEN CONTACTS MAY 19 WITH BROAD CROSS SECTION OF LABOR LEADERS AND WITH OTHER OBSERVERS REVEALED NO LABOR LINKS TO STUDENT PROTESTS. STUDENT "MANIFESTO" READ AT THE RALLY, ALSO GAVE INDICATION OF PCB INFLUENCE. IT DENOUNCED INTER ALIA "INTERESTS WHICH EXPLOIT THE WORKERS". "VIOLENCE (WHICH) GUARANTEES OWNERS' PROFITS" AND "OUR RIGHTS (WHICH) ARE VIOLATED BY ECONOMIC OPPRESSION AND REPRESSION." STATE DEPUTY (AND PCB MEMBER) ALBERTO GOLDMAN AND MDB FEDERAL DEPUTY AIRTON SOARES WERE AT THE MEDICINE FACULTY RALLY AND REPORTEDLY PRAISED THE STUDENT MOVEMENT FOR ITS MATURITY AND FOR SEEKING SUPPORT FROM OTHER AREAS OF THE SOCIETY.

6. COMMENT. THE INTENSE BEHIND THE SCENES ACTIVITY OF GOVRNMENT

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PAGE 02 SAO PA 01328 02 OF 02 251225Z

AND CHURCH AUTHORITES REVEALS HOW POLITICALLY DELICATE THE STUDENT SITUATION HAS BECOME. THESE ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS IN NINE YEARS. THIS GENERATION OF STUDENTS HAS HAD NO DIRECT EXPERIENCE WITH STREET PROTESTS AND POLICE REACTIONS, BUT THEIR PARENTS REMEMBER THE PRVIOUS SITUATION. THE POLICE TOO HAVE HAD TO THREAD THEIR WAY BETWEEN STRICT MAINTENCANCE OF LAW AND ORDER AND PARENTS' CONCERN. POLICE BEHAVIOR HAS ALSO BEEN CONDITIONED BY SIGNS THAT STUDENTS' DEMANDS ARE CONSIDERED LEGITIMATE BY MOST OF BRAZILIAN PUBLI, AS HAS BEEN SHOWN BY SMALL BUT GROWING POPULAR PARTICIPATIONIN, OR EXPRESSIONS OF SYMPATHY FOR, STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS. ALTHOUGH WE DO NOT HAVE DIRECT CONFIRMATION, PCB APPEARS TO BE TRYING TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS UNREST FOR ITS OWN PURPOSES, WHICH IS CAUSING GREAT UNEASINESS AMONG POLICE AND INTELLIGENCE SERVICEES. THE RALLIES OF MAY 19 BROUGHT OUT AT LEAST AS MANY STUDENTS IN THE CITY OF SAO PAULO, AND PERHAPS MORE, THAN THOSE OF MAY 5. STUDENTS MUST BE PLEASED WITH RESULTS SINCE THEY ARE PLANNING LARGER MEETINGS FOR MID-JUNE. POLICE SOURCES TELL US THAT SMALL RALLIES WILL BE HELD NEXT WEEK.

7. WHILE THERE IS NO EVIDENCE OF COMMUNIST CONTROL OF THE STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS, SOME ACTIVISTS LIKELY HOLD COMMUNIST SYMPATHIES, AND SEVERAL PCB MEMBERS (INCLUDING SAO PAULO MDB STATE DEPUTY ALBERTO GOLDMAN) HAVE BEEN ADVISING STUDENTS ON TACTICS AND GOALS.

8. EMBASSY CONCURS.
CHAPIN

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Message Attributes

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